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January 20, 2000

The Honorable Bill Richardson
U.S. Department of Energy
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal for Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. My comments are pertinent to the proposed transportation of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive defense waste from 72 commercial sites and 5 U.S. Department of Energy sites in the United States.

1 The Environmental Impact Statement assesses transportation impacts associated with shipping this nuclear material from 77 U.S. sites in only a very general manner. Nevertheless, numerous interstate highway routes and rail routes are depicted through the state of Missouri that could be utilized for shipment of this material to the proposed waste repository.

2 It is my understanding that current regulations that govern the shipment of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste require the avoidance of major population centers. In spite of this requirement, all of the potential highway and rail routes depicted in the Environmental Impact Statement through Missouri go through either the metropolitan areas of St. Louis and Kansas City, or both. These two metropolitan areas have a combined population of over 4.3 million people.

I would like to go on record at this time in opposition to the shipment of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste through Missouri and through this state's most urbanized population centers, St. Louis and Kansas City. The potential exposure of these concentrated populations to the risks associated with the shipment of material of this nature should preclude further consideration of routes that would involve these metropolitan regions in Missouri.

Very truly yours,

Mel Carnahan

MC/gh